



FROM THE EDITOR

One of the more notable aspects of traditional Chinese culture has been its esteem for and veneration of formal education. Traditionally, leadership and scholarship went hand in hand. The ruler was expected to be as well versed in the composition of a poem as he was in administering affairs of state. The purpose of his education was to form a mature and complete person, a man of vision and integrity, equally at home with the sacred and profane, whose leadership talents and practical skills were to be deployed in selfless service to his people. This ideal finds a resonant voice in the literature of western Christian education, and it is one of the reasons why Christian missionary organizations in China, until recent times, always maintained a highly visible institutional presence in this area. In retrospect, an argument can be made that the educational ministry of the Christian churches had more of an impact on modern China than their more obvious efforts at direct evangelization. The history of this educational ministry is the topic of our present issue, as is an abiding Christian concern for its present expression and future possibilities.

In "A Christian Education in China, a Retrospective" Professor Jessie G. Lutz traces for us the historical experience of the Christian churches in their educational ministry. Along the way she offers some rich insights into that ministry's strengths and weaknesses as well as an up-date on its present situation. She finds continuity with the past and hope for the future in the spirit and zeal of this generation of Chinese Christians, who have eagerly taken up the responsibility for what once was largely a western preserve.

In her research on modern education in China, Ruth Hayhoe came across the contribution made by two noted educationalists, Ma Xiangbo and Ying Lianzhi, both of whom shared a passion for traditional Chinese culture and a zeal for its transformation and rebirth in a society struggling to modernize. What makes her article on "A Chinese Catholic Philosophy of Higher Education in Republican China" particularly interesting is that both scholars also saw Christianity as the catalyst

for the integration of traditional culture and modern science. Their story is the story of the founding of Fu Jen University.

How does a modern Catholic university come to grips with the challenge of a modern secularized Chinese society? What has been lost and what can be retained? We are fortunate to have Archbishop Stanislaus Lokuang, the President of Fu Jen in Taiwan, address this issue for us. The Archbishop describes the changing face of Catholic education in an environment of divergent and often conflicting values. In a letter to us, Archbishop Lokuang serves up a fitting summary of his own article: "The ideals of a Catholic education are very high, but they are difficult to realize in practice. However, we in Fu Jen are putting forth our best efforts."

Just in case you were under the impression that all Catholic schools have remained closed on the mainland, Tripod's interview with Brother Zhang Ruiting might serve as an eye-opener. Brother is the founder and present principal of Xiangbo School in Beijing. Open for several years now, the school represents the great efforts being made by Christians on the mainland to bring Christian education into new areas of development.

In "The Death of Bishop Zhang Kexing", we were moved by the bishop's last letter, which bears witness to the tensions and conflicts that still exist within the Church in China. After so many years in prison for his faith, his friends were forbidden to give him some little comfort even in death. Our sentiments echo his own words "What a great pity."

It is holiday time for both East and West. We take this opportunity to wish all our readers the blessings of Christmas and good fortune in the coming Lunar New Year.